Dear Jim, 3/16/75

I guess it really is as you say in your 3/8. There are those problems, the most serious I think distance and the cost of overcoming it. I do not believe some of the others would have the complications you do but I'm probably too close to judge. I feel that some chapters can simply be left out and others, once there is existing support, condensed into a single paragraph. I undertook an enormous work and to make the evidence so detailed and so overwhelming that under the right circumstances it could break the whole thing open. I mean by this especially in terms of evidence, so thorough that it could stand in court. And the scope is too great for a popularization. I included documentation on the failure (hardly the word) of the press, as in The Unimpeachment. Or as complete a context as possible for an historical record, too.

Unless there can be a deal for publication there can't be an editor who is experienced in condensing. In this case there would be a complication for that editor because of the nature of the material. Unless he knows the case and has an open mind or is experienced in dealing with evidence, there will be problems.

The people from Playboy were here yesterday. I have the impression that they remain with the childish approach of 1967-8, when I dealt with others there. (I have a feeling that if I could ever get together with Heffner it might be different because the underlings all have to think in terms of what can be accepted by those above them and the popular magazine wisdom on what can be commercial.) They want certified pictures of the assassins in action plus dozens of supporting affidavits attached to signed confessions. Very unreal. Here JL was helpful. He came later. He tried to bring them back to reality, but do these publications get into contact with reality?

I hope it did not interfere with the presentation I made, but I was not happy about the overall circumstances. They were quite late getting here after phoning to say they'd arrived and were on schedule. At least two hours later. This meant a problem for Lil, who did not know whether they'd be here for lunch and/or supper. Because there were other things I had to do in the earlier a.m., like the grocery shopping and going to the post office with packages and getting this replacement for the borrowed machine that suddenly developed other troubles, it was not possible to collect documents for them in advance. I had hoped to be able to saw some wood because that saving is important to u I do it weekends only to be available to the phone. The forecast is for rain today and for me sawing on the hillside in the rain is not safe. However, while the wait was annoying and worrisome, it did enable me to get odds and ends done and cleaned up.

The articles editor, a youngish man named Jeffry Norman, called himself a skepti but I think it more likely he began with a negative attitude coming from knowledge of an existing editorial attitude. I know enough about McKinley to have picked up the feeling that they had talked it over and Jim knew the limitations that I didn't, again pre-existing prejudices that he had overcome only partly. This was particularly apparent on the judge Battle story, which would make a fine one even if it ended with a question mar

I told them I had all these documents so as we talked whenever they wanted to s one just ask me. They asked to see none, perhaps because they felt the time could be better spent in other ways and they assumed I was telling them the truth. But I'd have wanted to see some had I been in their roles.

What it boils down to is that I said that breaking apart the official explanati of the JFK assassination and having that destruction accepted is a major journalistic accomplishment. Destroying the Warren Report is nothing. I had done that with my first book. But getting official acceptance of the destruction, getting the major media to go along with it, and putting officialdom in the position of having to admit and then do something is a new ball game, particularly with these Congressional investigations ongoin I tried to get them to see that after Watergate and the anti-Hoover campaign there would a Congressional willingness to go into this and that with the documentation we could dump on them those in Congress would in all likelihood go for this. There is the quid pr quo in it for them. I told them of private attitudes of Members where I had personal knc ledge and tried to get them to see the great p.r. and prestige value of being able to get the washoff of delivering all these proofs and having them publicized and accepted. Even that there was ample time, as there is if a start is made. One of the attitudes

that was discouraging is their incuriosity on this. I do have experience with Congressional investigations. The probabilities are that the free publicity from this would be worth more than the total cost of the entire project yet they seemed to have neither interest nor appreciation.

They pay more for periodic advertising than the entire project would cost if it returned no profit.

Then there is Heffner's supposed interest in judtice and in framings, where he today is part victim of one and the same forces are involved. Meant nothing that was reflected.

On Ray there were similar problems and that was the beginning of their interest. We never got to the point of what kind of story can we do. Not even enough or the right kind of general talking. They jumped around so it was also impossible to make this kind of pitch. Not because there could not have been time but because after travelling all this distance Norman had made himself a social engagement in Washington for dinner or beginning then and that came first.

So, on that there just wasn't time for an entirely different kind of proposal I would have like to have made.

I dontt suppose that people in Norman's position ever consider that there are some things a little more complicated than their run-of-the-mill pieces, that the complications need not be in the stories butxxxxxxx must be editorially comprehended and that they live the cliches or their normal lives, not allowing themselves the little time xx it takes to escape these limitations.

Or maybe they fear what decision or recommendation could do to their careers and jobs because they know the sttitudes they'll confront.

I think what may come of this will now depend on what they can see in what they read if they take the time to read.

They are to pick up copies of some of the court papers in the Ray case from Lesar and they have the unedited version of Post Mortem. I can see Norman regarding much of the original of Post Mortem as ad hominems and being turned off by it and the unhidden passion, which is foreign to popular writing. I can see him finding the painstaking laying of a basis for believing and understanding the inherently incredible as verbosity and reading no further.

Whatever the realities are, there is nothing I can do about it now and there probably will not be later, either unless there is not a negative decision.

They were even without curiosity about the potential of the suits, even when I said that the FBI was saying it would give me the spectro and enutron results that would be provable fakes or the total destruction of the case. And that I would prove fakes to be fakes in court. But that we'd have this stuff in a very short time. We had learned this just the day before. Lesar read from the letters I had and gave a lawyer's explanations. They were simple enough. But no visible reaction, not even to the confessed deceptions from on top.

Maybe eveyone is just this blase today.

McKinley had agreed to say overnight so we could ~~sddddd~~ discuss other matters He didn't and he didn't tell me he wouldn't until he left. I find no encouragement in this.

As of now I think that after months of effort McKinley had developed a very limited interest without letting me know and letting me believe the opposite and that Norman had this limited interest only. That is much to be overcome by the kinds of writing not normal in editorial offices, Post Mortem and legal papers. Had I known our time was to be this limited I'd have prepared encapsulations and had little stacks of documents for each. I'd never expect people to do that much travelling for less than a fairly full exploration.

However, if they take the time to read all the weight of the evidence may be within their comprehension and they may see the possibilities that are there, that with the radically changed situation today is, I believe a real probability.

Without reason for it, I'll hope. Best,